

FINAL MINUTES OF TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Utilities Field Operations Training Center
35 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa, CA
September 11, 2023

Attendees: Matt Fullner, Valley of The Moon Water District
Peter Martin, City of Santa Rosa
Tony Williams, North Marin Water District
Pam Jeane, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA)
Craig Scott, City of Cotati
Matt Wargula, City of Sonoma
Mike Berger, City of Sonoma
Christina Goulart, Town of Windsor
Shannon Cotulla, Town of Windsor
Lucy Croy, Marin Municipal Water District
Michelle Montoya, City of Santa Rosa

Staff/Alternates: Mike Thompson, SCWA
Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA
Don Seymour, SCWA
Paul Piazza, SCWA
Kent Gylfe, SCWA
Lynne Rosselli, SCWA
Daniella Favela, City of Petaluma

Public: Brenda Adelman, Russian River Watershed Protection

1. Check In
Matt Fullner, TAC Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.
2. Public Comment
None.
3. Water Supply Conditions and Temporary Urgency Change Order
Don Seymour, SCWA, presented.
Both reservoirs are still very full for this time of year and heading into the new water year with a lot of carry over storage. Lake Mendocino is just under 82,000 acre-feet (AF) and Lake Sonoma is just over 236,000 AF. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has not yet responded to PG&E's temporary variance request for the Potter Valley Project, which has resulted in higher inflows than anticipated into Lake Mendocino. If FERC had issued that order, it would have reduced the inflows into Lake Mendocino by 110 to 140 AF per day. Regarding the temporary urgency change order, Sonoma Water is continuing to make releases to meet the minimum stream flow requirements which were approved back in May. This reduced the minimum stream flow requirements on the upper Russian River

from 150 cubic feet per second (CFS) to 125 CFS and from 125 CFS to 70 CFS on the lower Russian River. The existing order expires October 15, and Sonoma Water is preparing new petitions for this fall and will be requesting that the minimum stream flow requirements be based on storage at Lake Mendocino instead of Lake Pillsbury and that the changes take effect beginning January 1, 2024.

No public comment.

4. Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership

a. 2023 Water Production Relative to 2013 Benchmark

Matt Fullner, Valley of the Moon Water District, presented.

For July, the Partnership achieved 27% savings below the 2013 benchmark and a cumulative 29% year to date.

b. Water Use Efficiency Messaging

Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA, presented.

The last summer campaign outreach item will be the promotion of the water smart plant labels program. SCWA is working with KBBF to do one hour radio shows that provides information to the Spanish language audience. Paul Piazza was recently interviewed for the Nuestra Tierra Program which is hosted by Hugo Mata. The interview can be found on Sonoma County's website. The Partnership attended the Fiesta de Independencia at the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts. The event had a great turn out.

c. State Water Board Draft Regulation For Making Conservation a California Way of Life

Paul Piazza, SCWA, presented.

On August 18, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) initiated the formal rulemaking for "Making Conservation a California Way of Life" (Regulation). As part of the rulemaking, the State Board released draft regulations intended to implement AB 1668 and SB 606 with the initial public comment period going through October 17. The Urban Water Use Objective is a total water budget made up of indoor residential water budgets, outdoor residential water budgets, CII-DIM outdoor water budgets, an urban water loss objective, and variances if applicable. Each suppliers' Urban Water Use Objective will be determined using statewide efficiency standards for the urban water uses, as well as unique local service area characteristics. Urban Retail Water Suppliers would need to meet an Agency-Specific Urban Water Use Objective beginning in 2025 and would also need to implement CII performance measures. There will be annual reporting requirements starting January 1, 2024, and must be completed by January 1 every year thereafter. The State Board has acknowledged that the regulation will not be finalized by January 1, 2024 (likely spring 2024) and has verbally indicated that enforcement will not take place until the regulation has been finalized. There will be a modified reporting template for 2024.

Peter Martin, Santa Rosa Water, asked if more details on the metrics to be incorporated into the report will be provided.

Paul Piazza, SCWA, answered that there is a draft reporting template that included easy to fill out information about each retail water agency and a lot of the reporting metrics are highlighted in that. Anticipates more guidance will become available. Craig Scott, City of Cotati, asked if the public water systems definition was 3000 connections.

Paul Piazza answered that, by definition, it is urban water retailers that provide 3000 acre-ft or greater.

No public comment.

5. Biological Opinion Status Update

Pam Jeane, SCWA, presented.

Fish Flow Project – No change right now. Continuing to work on the draft Environmental Impact Report in anticipation of recirculation.

Dry Creek Project – Construction is underway for Phase IV and Phase V. Right-of-way staff is continuing to work with property owners in Dry Creek as part of Phase VI, tentatively planned for construction in 2024 and 2025.

Habitat Monitoring and Maintenance – Post-construction monitoring has been completed and information is being collected to determine when maintenance activities can take place.

Fish Monitoring – Last week a video monitoring camera was setup at Mirabel. This will mainly be used to monitor Chinook but will also record coho and steelhead as they move upstream past the dam. Provided statistics and average returns for Chinook since monitoring began at Mirabel Dam in 2000.

Russian River Estuary Management Project – The mouth of the Russian River is open, and the lagoon management season is scheduled to end on October 15th. Biological and water quality monitoring for the season is already underway.

Biological Assessment for New Biological Opinion – The Biological Assessment has been submitted to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. All of the comments that both agencies made to the draft version were addressed.

No public comment.

6. Potter Valley Project Update

Pam Jeane, SCWA, presented.

PG&E let the stakeholders know that if they (meaning stakeholders) had an interest submitting a proposal regarding the Potter Valley Project license surrender process, to let them know by end of July. Sonoma Water, Mendocino Inland Water and Power Commission, and the Round Valley Indian Tribes did submit a proposal to PG&E. The purpose of the proposal was to keep the opportunity of the diversion of the Eel River to the Russian River alive. The proposal included a timeline and milestones. There has been no response from PG&E at this point. The Department of Water Resources grant work for the Cape Horn Dam facilities assessment is underway. The consultants are evaluating three diversion scenarios as part of the facilities assessment. A meeting with a technical advisory group (fisheries biologists) that is evaluating the scenarios is taking place next.

No public comment.

7. Russian River Water Forum Update

Mike Thompson, SCWA, presented.

A lot has happened with the Russian River Water Forum (RRWF). The Planning group meeting was held on August 17 and then the Steering Committee met the next day, August 18. Planning group meeting discussed the proponents, which consists of the Sonoma County Water Agency, Mendocino Inland Water and Power Commission and the Round Valley Indian Tribe submitted a proposal to PG&E by the July 31 deadline. A presentation to the Planning Group was made by representatives of the three proponents and covered timelines and answered questions. There was an emphasis that the proposal was meant to reflect co-equal objectives of fish passage and on-going water supply reliability. Some of the responses heard were surrounding consensus and support. There were concerns expressed that this proposal may slow down dam removal. The biggest comment heard had to do with transparency as some were shocked about the proposal, while others expressed relief and understanding. The question has turned to how the RRWF will be involved in the proponent's process to announce the proposal with PG&E. There was supposed to be a meeting last week for the RRWF, but there had not been enough progress to report out on. The proponents are working on two critical timelines. First, is the creation of the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) which needs to be completed by the end of this calendar year. Second, convening a table to negotiate a settlement agreement on the new Eel - Russian River facility by October 21. There have been several conversations with Lake County regarding saving Lake Pillsbury and how the decommissioning process may address their concerns. The four working group are in various stages of convening. There is a lot of work happening with DWR regarding the Potter Valley facilities, the fish passage alternatives, and Potter Valley hydrogeologic investigations and storage. The water supply and fishery working group is on hold until the technical work and the DWR study completed. The governance group is also on hold, as an interim JPA is being worked on. The water rights group has met, and their main charge is to focus on education of water users and water rights holders. The development of that information ties into the finance group. The finance group has not scheduled a meeting, but the plan is to have two separate groups. One to look at capital projects or capital funding, and the second smaller group would consist of Russian River water users and beneficiaries who would help work out the ongoing operation and maintenance of the facility. The first draft of a potential budget has been put together.

No public comment.

8. Community and Government Affairs Update

Brad Sherwood, SCWA, was not present. This item was not presented.

9. Items for Next Agenda

None.

10. Check Out

Matt Fullner, TAC Vice Chair, adjourned the meeting at 9:44 a.m.